

For immediate release

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Contact: Dan Williamson, Mayor's Office, 645-5300
Erin Miller, Environmental Steward, 645-0815

Mayor Coleman Proposes Curbside Recycling By 2012

Five-Year Plan Also Includes Green Jobs and Loans for Energy Efficiency and Green Development

Mayor Michael B. Coleman's today released the City of Columbus' sustainability goals for the next five years, including a comprehensive curbside recycling program for single-family households by 2012. Mayor Coleman announced a community process to gather public input this year to determine the best way to achieve this goal. The mayor said the starting point for the discussion will be a proposal to combine recycling and yard waste collection on a rotating schedule.

"Recycling is not a luxury. It is a necessity, and as a necessity it should be a basic neighborhood service," Mayor Coleman said. "We will seek public input over the coming months about the best way to accomplish this goal. But we will start this discussion by putting our initial proposal on the table."

Mayor Coleman believes combining recycling and yard waste collection would make sense for several reasons:

- During the winter and other months, there's little yard waste to collect, yet trucks travel through the city, wasting time, money and energy. Combining yard waste and recycling services on a rotating schedule would be more cost-effective, energy-efficient and environmentally-friendly.
- Those who don't recycle at all today will be able to recycle conveniently at their curbsides at no additional cost, and those who pay for curbside recycling today will no longer have to do so.
- If Columbus can divert as much as 35 percent of our waste from its landfill, the city could save more than \$5 million in landfill costs.

The curbside recycling goal was included in Green Memo II, a continuation of the mayor's original Green Memo released in 2005. Green Memo II lays out a plan to be implemented through 2015 plan. Other highlights include:

- Creation of a Green Business Incubator in partnership with Sci-Tech, Tech Columbus, Ohio State University and Battelle to encourage entrepreneurship in the Green Job Industry.
- Establishment of the Green Switch program, a \$1 million low-interest revolving loan fund to assist businesses in energy efficiency building renovations.
- Launch of the Green Columbus Fund, a grant program to incentivize the development of green buildings and redevelopment of small brownfield sites such as abandoned gas stations.

"We have made tremendous strides in the greening of Columbus through a mix of city initiatives and by inspiring our community to do better," said Columbus Environmental Steward Erin Miller.

"Through efforts such as improvement of water quality issues, encouragement of transportation alternatives and reduction of natural resource demand, we are creating an environment and quality of life that will lead to business expansion and job growth."

A few of the significant programs that have been instituted since the release of the original Green Memo in 2005 including:

- A commitment to improving energy efficiency in older city facilities and a mandate that every new city construction project be LEED-certified by the U.S. Green Building Council;
- The development of a Bicentennial Bikeways Plan which calls for an additional 36 miles of off-road trails and 58 miles of on-street bike lanes and routes by the year 2015;
- The GreenSpot program which launched in July 2008 to inspire, educate and recognize residents and businesses making efforts to get green; and
- A commitment to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions by signing onto the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement and pledging to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from city operations 40 percent by 2030.

Columbus has received recognition for numerous environmental efforts. In 2009, Smarter Cities, a project of the Natural Resources Defense Council, ranked Columbus 15th among the 67 largest cities evaluated. *Bicycle Magazine* named Columbus one of five cities to watch in the future, due in part to the City's Bicentennial Bikeways Plan effort. Third-party national benchmarking program, SustainLane, recognized Columbus' achievements by listing them among the most improved cities for performance in urban sustainability in 2008.

A full-version of Green Memo II is available at:

<http://www.getgreencolumbus.org/PDFs/GreenMemo2010.pdf>

Progress towards accomplishing the goals of the memo will be published within Annual Reports which can also be accessed online at: www.getgreencolumbus.org.